

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- A method of selling healthcare services to a patient, the method comprising:
 establishing a plurality of contracting healthcare service providers;
- providing a case statement template having one or more areas to specify clinical and non-clinical requirements of the patient;

receiving case statement information, at least a portion of which is provided by the patient;

preparing a case statement based on the case statement information;

delivering the case statement to at least one contracting healthcare service provider; and

receiving a response from the at least one contracting healthcare service provider, the response including a price, a clinical track record, and service information.

- 2. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the response includes information concerning one or more clinical quality indicators for one healthcare service provider.
- 3. A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein the one or more clinical quality indicators includes the mortality rate for a medical procedure.
- 4. A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein the one or more clinical quality indicators includes the number of times a medical procedure has been performed.
 - 5. A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein the one or more clinical quality indicators includes the number of times a medical procedure has been performed by a physician associated with one of the one or more contracting healthcare service providers.
- 6. A method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising reviewing the proposal from the at least one healthcare service provider.

20

5

10



- 7. A method as claimed in claim 6, wherein reviewing the proposal from the at least one healthcare service provider includes reviewing the proposal with a referring physician.
- 8. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the proposal includes information concerning the total cost of a medical procedure.
- 9. A method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising securing the services of a responding healthcare service provider by sending a deposit to the responding healthcare service provider.
- 10. A method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising securing the services of a responding healthcare service provider by sending a deposit to a marketplace operator and sending a remaining amount to the responding healthcare service provider.
- 11. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein preparing a case statement from case statement information includes filtering unique identifying information.
- 12. A method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising scheduling an outpatient visit with the patient and a staff member of the at least one contracting healthcare service provider.
- 13. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the price is a not-to-exceed amount.
- 14. A method as claimed in claim 13, wherein the price includes the combined charges of a facility of the at least contracting healthcare service provider and the principal professionals performing the healthcare services.
- 15. A system of selling healthcare services, the system comprising:
 - a database of contracting healthcare service providers;
- a healthcare case statement information submission mechanism including areas for a patient's clinical and non-clinical requirements;
- a healthcare case statement distribution engine to deliver case statements to healthcare service providers;
 - a proposal construction engine including clinical quality indicator areas; and

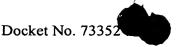


a response-receiving engine to receive responses from healthcare service providers and to deliver the responses to the patient.

- 16. A system as claimed in claim 15, further comprising a database of patients.
- 17. A system as claimed in claim 15, wherein the response reviewing engine5 checks responses for clinical quality indicators.
 - 18. A system as claimed in claim 17, wherein the clinical quality indicators include the mortality rate for a medical procedure.
 - 19. A system as claimed in claim 17, wherein the clinical quality indicators include the number of times a medical procedure has been performed.
 - 20. A system as claimed in claim 17, wherein the clinical quality indicators include the number of times a medical procedure has been performed by a physician associated with one particular response.
 - 21. A system as claimed in claim 15, further comprising a referring physician template.
 - 22. A system as claimed in claim 15, further comprising a contact mechanism including a number of input mechanisms to construct a message.
 - 23. A system as claimed in claim 15, wherein the proposal construction engine checks responses for a price of healthcare services listed therein.
 - 24. A system as claimed in claim 15, further comprising a billing module.
- 20 25. A system as claimed in claim 15, further comprising at least one patient terminal coupled to the case statement information submission mechanism.
 - 26. A system as claimed in claim 15, further comprising at least one service provider terminal coupled to the healthcare case statement distribution engine.
- 27. A system as claimed in claim 15, wherein the healthcare case statement submission mechanism; the healthcare case statement distribution engine; the proposal construction engine; and the response-receiving engine are located on a server.

20

5



28. A method of selling healthcare services to a patient, the method comprising: establishing a plurality of contracting healthcare service providers;

providing a case statement template having one or more areas to specify clinical and non-clinical requirements of the patient;

extracting case statement information, at least a portion of which is provided by the patient, from the case statement template;

preparing a case statement based on the case statement information;

establishing case statement profile criteria for each of the plurality of contracting healthcare service providers;

making the case statement available to each contracting healthcare service provider whose profile criteria matches the case statement; and

receiving a response to the case statement from at least one contracting healthcare service provider, the response including a price, a clinical track record, and non-clinical information.

- 29. A method as claimed in claim 28, wherein the response includes information concerning one or more clinical quality indicators for one healthcare service provider.
- 30. A method as claimed in claim 29, wherein the one or more clinical quality indicators includes the mortality rate for a medical procedure.
- A method as claimed in claim 29, wherein the one or more clinical quality 31. indicators includes the number of times a medical procedure has been performed.
 - A method as claimed in claim 29, wherein the one or more clinical quality 32. indicators includes the number of times a medical procedure has been performed by a physician associated with one of the one or more contracting healthcare service providers.
- 25 33. A method as claimed in claim 28, further comprising reviewing the proposal from the at least one healthcare service provider.



34. A method as claimed in claim 33, wherein reviewing the proposal from the at least one healthcare service provider includes reviewing the proposal with a referring physician.